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ABSTRACT

Intended to illuminate the issues surrounding the coordination of vocational training systems in developing countries, this document raises questions about what should be coordinated, how, by whom, and for what purpose. After an introduction, the following six sections are presented: (1) "The Nature of Coordination," which distinguishes coordination from management and defines coordination as bringing parts or separate entities together in a proper relationship, thereby causing them to function together for a wider purpose; (2) "Coordination amongst Nonformal Skill Providers," which offers advice on coordination issues relevant to private institutional training and training both within and outside government; (3) "Coordination with the Formal Education System," which raises issues regarding the coordination between general education, occupational skills acquisition, vocational education, and vocational training; (4) "Coordination with the Outside World," which discusses the relationships between training and manpower, training and technological change, training and the labor market, and training and the business/industrial enterprise; (5) "Mechanisms for Coordination," which describes a "coordinating ministry" model and a "training council" model; and, finally, (6) "Summary and Conclusions." (CML)

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TRAINING POLICIES

Discussion Paper No. 25

CO-ORDINATION OF TRAINING SYSTEMS - SOME BASIC ISSUES

by

Derek L. Bowland

Note: Discussion papers are preliminary material circulated to stimulate discussion and critical comment.

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PREFACE

There are mounting pressures on vocational training systems in most countries, and particularly in the developing world, to do more and to do it better. These pressures arise from a number of sources: rapid population growth, structural and technological change, the need to grow more food and generally increase productive capacity and rising expectations in line with higher levels of education, to name a few. But these greater demands on training systems have co-incided with a reduction in resources available for training (as a result of adjustment policies, the debt crisis, and global economic recession); thus the issue of how to achieve more with reduced resources has become central to skills development policy formulation.

A standard reaction to this issue is to suggest that training systems "should be better co-ordinated", but experience indicates that there is a lack of clarity about what should be co-ordinated, with what, by whom, for what purpose and how. The resulting misunderstandings, false starts and ill-conceived initiatives are tending to waste resources rather than conserve them.

In this paper we attempt to shed a little light on some of the the basic issues in co-ordination. We hope that this will help provide those asked to improve the co-ordination of training systems with a clearer idea of the scope and dimension of their task, and some insights into the problems they are likely to encounter.

Two contrasting quotations may help illustrate the diversity of views surrounding the issue of training systems and their co-ordination. The first, a comment from an ILO expert, discusses the training "system" in his country of assignment, focusing on the way that intentions are conveyed and implementation and quality monitored.

> "It is misleading to think of training structures of this type as "systems". The basic mechanisms of feedback and control are flawed, if they exist at all. The literal requirements are transmitted accurately enough through extensive documentation, committees and seminars at every level. The required returns are furnished more or less on time and incorporated in voluminous reports. It is about as systematic as a conveyor belt. The structure may superficially resemble a system, but it lacks sensory perception and, therefore, control."

> "On the question of quality assurance, and the feedback of market results, there is simply no national mechanism. Educational and training institutions monitor their own activities and results are fed back to the centre without effective checks. With the inevitable results. Last week we learned from one employer that four out of ten newly certificated graduates of the automotive course here were sent home on the first day because they did not know how to drain a sump. Only two now remain in his employ."

The second, from an official of a provincial training board, refers mainly to standards and sees things in simpler terms.

> "Most of the provincial departments (agriculture, industry, etc.) are running vocational training. Co-ordination becomes very difficult because while one department may have the facilities to train to a particular national skill level, others may not. Once all departments have similar levels of facilities, co-ordination will tend to arise naturally."

Without getting too involved in the question of what distinguishes a training system from a training structure one can infer from the above observations that it has at least something to do with interaction in the pursuit of an established purpose, and with control, feedback and adaptability. Can the "mechanisms" for achieving relevance and responsiveness exist only in an interventionist environment (typically through a high degree of centralisation), will they evolve naturally given certain other conditions (a laissez-faire approach), or are there stategies which do not go to either extreme?

This paper starts from the position that such strategies do exist and that one key to their success is effective co-ordination. But the need for more effective co-ordination has acquired the status of received wisdom and, as such, tends not to be looked at very closely. The questions that need to be asked are: better co-ordinated with what, by whom and - finally - for what purpose? Ultimately what do we mean be co-ordination?

As befits an "issues paper", this document does not pretend to provide definitive answers to these questions. Its purpose is to look a little more closely into this apparently critical issue in order to offer some insights into its nature and importance and some exploration of the problems associated with achieving effective co-ordination.

2. The nature of co-ordination

Let us begin with one important clarification. Managing training, or a training system, is not necessarily the same thing as co-ordinating it, even if one has to "manage" the process of co-ordination. Co-ordination has to do with bringing parts or separate entities into a proper relationship; causing them to function together for a wider purpose. This is not a mere semantic nicety but a recognition of the holistic nature of training systems and of the inter-dependence of their components. Many no doubt well-intentioned efforts to co-ordinate the diversity of training action in a country have foundered because they have failed to recognise this distinction. In an environment where there is a high degree of centralised direction, notably in centrally planned countries, this distinction may not be valid but for most countries appreciation of the difference is critical to the success of co-ordination efforts.

The importance one attaches to co-ordination - and the difficulty of achieving it - depends on how broadly the term is defined and on the scope and character of the "system" to be co-ordinated. Many countries have "national training systems", by which they tend to mean a network of pre-employment training institutions reporting to a central training authority (bureau, directorate-general or whatever) at a national or provincial level. Such systems are often characterised by a relatively high-level of centralised

authority, manifested in standard courses and curricula and centralised decision-making on workshop equipment, operating budgets, staffing levels and profiles, conditions of employment, etc.

Managing such systems can often be difficult, particularly in physically widespread or administratively complex countries. Maintenance of control and of standards poses many problems. So, too, does the process of conveying policies, instructions and intentions to the various entities (training centres, for instance) making up the system, and of receiving feedback to enable their effectiveness to be evaluated and remedial action taken. This is an important - indeed critical - question, but it is not essentially one of co-ordination.

Others countries, in contrast, have opted for more decentralised approaches to skills provision, prefering to leave the way in which certain standards are reached to individual training suppliers. Thus the content, structure and duration of training programmes will vary from institution to institution but all will aim at reaching a common skill standard defined through national testing and certification procedures. Whilst the local institutions or group of training suppliers have to be managed, the effort at the national level to ensure coherence, complementarity, and the maintenance of quality standards is much more one of co-ordination: of causing or aiding separate entities to function together for a wider purpose, as we noted earlier.

It would be wrong, however, to assume that the difference between managing and co-ordinating training can be explained solely in terms of centralised versus decentralised systems. Co-ordination, as defined in this paper, is concerned with an environment which is broader and, usually, less bureaucratic than that found in most "structured" training systems, and which takes into account not only co-ordination amongst skill suppliers but also between them and the consumers of training.

Within this broader view of co-ordination we have identified three areas which merit particular attention. They are:

(i) co-ordination amongst providers of non-formal skills training;[1]

(ii) co-ordination between non-formal skills training and the formal school system;

(iii) co-ordination with the "outside world", the market-place for skills.

The three are by no means self-contained but are sufficiently distinct to serve as a framework for discussing some of the major issues.

3. Co-ordination amongst non-formal skill providers

In addition to networks of non-formal, pre-employment training centres, often set up under the auspices of ministries of labour or manpower and frequently styled "national training systems", a wide variety of other skill providers exists. The main sources of non-formal skills development, apart from the "public" system, are:

(i) training centres and programmes offered by other departments of government (i.e. outside the "national training system");
(ii) training provided by non-governmental organisations and the private sector;
(iii) training provided by and/or within enterprises.

The third of these will be considered later under co-ordination with the "outside world".

3.1 Training in the government

In many developing countries training is offered by a variety of sectoral ministries and other departments of government (e.g. ministries of health, housing and local government, agriculture, construction, public works and transport; departments responsible for railways, ports, electricty generation and distribution and so forth). This type of training has a number of distinguishing features:

(i) it is demand-orientated, being broadly geared to the perceived skill needs of its sponsoring ministry;

(ii) as such, it is largely for employees rather than for new entrants to the labour market (though it may be "job-entry" or "pre-service" training as regards level);

(iii) it is often set-up as a response to the shortcomings - real or perceived - of the "public" training system.

"Public" training systems were originally conceived with the objective of meeting critical skill and manpower needs wherever they arose, and this included the public sector, still a significant source of employment in many countries. But static or declining wage employment coupled with rapidly expanding youth populations have obliged training systems to take on new, "supply-orientated"[2] roles geared to the provision of supposedly employable skills, training for self-employment and - in some cases - acting as a "holding camp" on the path between school and the adult world.

A number of co-ordination issues arise from this situation. They include:

(i) the need for sectoral ministries to work closely with the public system in order to specify the types and levels of skill requirements they foresee and to agree on what the public system can and cannot do;

(ii) as part of (i), a requirement to evaluate the training provided by the public system and work constructively to improve it where necessary;

(iii) means of ensuring that, where sectoral ministries continue to maintain their own specialised training facilities, training builds on that given in the public system and is geared to agreed quality standards;

(iv) avoidance of <u>unnecessary</u> competition for resources (money for buildings and equipment, limited numbers of good instructors with practical experience) and of duplication (developing curriculum materials which already exist elsewhere), given that government, as a whole, is generally short of funds;

(v) as part of (iv) the need to clearly identify where competition between government agencies is healthy and where it is not.

One often perfectly valid reason for a government department to set up its own training programme or centre is the requirement to train people quickly. Public system institutes, it is argued, give 6 or 12 months programmes, too broad or general in nature, and their graduates still need specialised training. Experience suggests, however, that sectoral training programmes established to meet urgent, clearly defined needs often become "institutionalised" over time to a point where they are almost as remote from real sectoral needs as the public system institutions.

Co-ordination issues here, apart from those within the sectoral ministry itself, relate to:

(i) working with the public system to determine the extent to which it can mount accelerated courses covering part if not all of the special need;

(ii) drawing from the public system advice and expertise on follow-up training programmes, or the structuring of on-the-job learning;

(iii) generally maintaining in clear focus the objectives of efforts to cater for the specialised needs of the sector which cannot be satisfactorily met elsewhere, and monitoring whether those objectives remain valid over time.

On this latter point, sectoral training facilities may have an important role to play in providing the skills needed to carry through specific development projects. The "human resources impact analysis" approach,[3] advocated as an essential element in development project planning, should take account not only of needs but of the capacity of the public system delivering these skills (and, therefore, of any special provisions required).

One of the "thorniest" issues of co-ordination is the extent to which any one department can, or should attempt to exercise a co-ordinating role over all training provided under the auspices of government agencies. A guiding principle is that "co-ordination" should not become the excuse for orthodoxy, the single, "right" way of acquiring skills, for the building of co-ordinating empires as weapons in inter-ministerial power struggles, or the inflation of bureaucracies. Nor should "co-ordination" become an end in itself, constraining individual initiative and stifling <u>healthy</u> competition

("unhealthy" competition being defined as that which leads to the misuse of scarce resources, the expansion of one institution at the expense of another etc). These issues are taken up in greater detail in section 6 which looks at mechanisms for co-ordination.

3.2 Training outside the government

The greater part of skills development effort in many countries is exercised outside government, formally or informally within or by enterprises, by a range of non-governmental and private institutions, and in the informal sector. Focusing for the moment on "institutional" training, the reasons for the growth and, quite often, the success of extra-governmental training shed some light on the difficulties of attempting to exercise any co-ordination, either amongst the multiplicity of providers and between them and the "public system". Amongst the reasons for the growth of extra-governmental training one can highlight:

(i) exclusion, for a variety of reasons, of large numbers of people from the public system.

(ii) responsiveness to market needs.

The three most usual reasons for exclusion from the public system (reasons which are to some degree interrelated) are (i) the quantitative inadequacy of the system (i.e. public institutions simply cannot absorb the large number of would-be trainees); (ii) the geographic outreach of the system (i.e. people, usually in remote rural areas, do not have access to public system training); (iii) entry barriers erected by the system, notably those of educational attainment, literacy, social grouping, sex, race, etc., etc.

Non-governmental organisations have targeted many of their efforts on these "disadvantaged" groups, setting up training programmes where the public network does not reach and lowering the barriers of access. Courses tend to be shorter, more flexible as to timetable (e.g. part-time, evening), low cost, very often linked quite closely to local community needs and - on the other side of the coin - light on knowledge content (as opposed to skill content)

self-contained (in the sense that they do not provide a platform for further learning), uncertified and unrecognised outside the confines of the local community. They often provide a very necessary impetus to income-generation and community development and at times the training methods and media used are highly sophisticated. On the other hand, there is much re-inventing of the wheel and the quality of some training materials and trainers leaves much to be desired.

It is tempting to suppose that the diverse and scattered nature of these activities, not to mention their administratively "informal" character, defies co-ordination. Indeed, to the extent that co-ordination is interpreted as "bureaucratic interference" it would tend to negate some of the advantages of this type of training. Yet there are certain benefits to be gained from co-ordinating extra-governmental skills development more closely with the mainstream. These include:

(i) Avoidance of waste and duplication: there are many instances of well-meaning NGO initiatives conflicting with similar activities carried out in the same area by other NGOs or by government agencies, resulting in confusion and diluting the viability of each endeavour (competition for trainees and instructors, different philosophies and different standards, etc.);

(ii) Sharing resources and experiences: though the public system may be relatively inflexible and of limited adaptive capacity, it is usually fairly systematic in areas like needs assessment, programme design and curriculum materials development. Furthermore its instructors, though sometimes lacking in practical experience, often have sound pedagogical training. Non-governmental skills development often displays exactly the opposite characteristics. Clearly the public system could furnish expertise in training materials development, course design, instructor training, etc. and benefit, in turn, from the NGO's greater understanding of and access to the "grass-roots" and innovative approaches to skills transfer.

(iii) Standards and acceptability: extra-governmental organisations are often very good at responding to immediate, localised needs. Problems arise, however, when trainees attempt to use their training in another environment (for example, in the city) or as the basis for access to further training. Training that does not correspond to nationally recognised standards may be of little value - or be perceived as such - in these other environments. If NGOs are provided with information on the content of more formalised training and the way in which this is geared to trade testing and certification schemes they should be able to provide a better platform for further learning and the basis for greater occupational, social and geographic mobility. Amongst other things, this should also help to increase the "knowledge component" of NGO training, essential to the eventual acquisition of higher-level skills.

(iv) Information flow: extra-governmental organisations need their contacts at the local level but also, on occasions, a linkage to the agencies of government and knowledge of the main lines of development policy. A better flow of information could ensure that the activities of NGOs were better co-ordinated amongst themselves and that their efforts were better known to local and national government. This would not only remove some of the suspicion with which certain NGOs are viewed but would facilitate the process of mutual support and improve the quality and relevance of the training provided. It would also, incidentally, be a step towards a more harmonised and consistent policy for overseas technical assistance.

3.3 Private "institutional" training

In several countries government-sponsored training organisations function as though they were private institutions in order to escape the more restrictive administrative regulations of government-proper. For such organisations (foundations or bodies with a similar legal standing) the co-ordination issues are much the same as for government-managed institutions, although the temptation to take an independent policy line may be stronger. In this section, however, we are primarily concerned with "private-for-profit" organisations completely outside the government armpit.

Private training institutions, operating for profit, are able to exist because there is a market for their services - or so it is claimed. If there is no market, private schools quickly go out of business and thus, it is said, they represent the "best fit" response to skill demand. Certainly a tour round many developing country cities and towns would seem to support this view: the name boards for private training schools are everywhere.

For long enough, however, such schools have been outside or on the margins of the training world, shunned by the "establishment" for a variety of reasons. These reasons include a degree of jealousy of the commerical success achieved by some private schools and the free-wheeling flexibility with which they operate. But private schools were also suspected, often with justification, of being on the charlatan fringe, of offering training and diplomas they could not deliver, and of exploiting those unable to get a job or the desperation of those seeking overseas employment (a typical situation in many South and South-East Asian countries). They also tend to cluster in "fashionable" skill areas such as office automation, computers, T.V. repair, electronics, dressmaking, etc. with scant regard for the risk of saturating the market for these skills as well as for the real employability of their graduates. By the time trainees realise that their training does not lead to employment or equip them for self-employment the training institution may have "cut and run" with its profits or moved on to new programmes.

But private training is at last emerging from the shadow of official disapproval. Training authorities are realising that private schools, for all their shortcomings, do have a potentially important role to play; that essentially they are close to the skills market-place and have the adaptive capacity to respond quickly to the market's volatility; that they have certain comparative advantages; that they can, indeed, fill gaps the public system is unable or unwilling to fill. How then, can the private schools be brought closer to the "mainstream" without destroying their competitive advantage?

Co-ordination, in this environment, has two major facets. One is concerned with <u>regulation</u>, the official recognition and, in some cases, licensing of training schools with a view to ensuring that certain standards are observed (standards relating partly to programmes but also to premises,

safety and health, qualifications and status of teaching staff and so forth). The other has to do with certification, improving the training offered so that it can become an alternative route to achieving a recognisable national standard.

One of the main perceived shortcomings of many private schools is that they lack the time and resources to develop appropriate, good quality training materials. Their options, therefore, are to "poach" what they can get of material produced by public institutions, buy commercially available training software (usually developed for very different environments), or patch together courses based on whatever their instructors happen to know or can lay their hands on. The same problems are encountered in curriculum and programme development.

Since private training institutions are often low-cost operations there is also a tendency to make use of unqualified or part-time instructors. Part-time instructors, perhaps "moonlighting" from government training institutions, may be well-qualified but are unlikely to put much extra effort into developing new material or designing programmes tailored to the special needs of their students. Other "instructors" may well be recent graduates from other training institutions, who lack both pedagogical training and practical trade experience, or skilled craftsmen who know little of "formal" training methods.

The co-ordination issue here centres around whether and how the public system, with its presumed advantage in skills analysis, programme and materials development, and instructor training can help to upgrade the quality, relevance and effectiveness of what is taught in private schools. Approaches could include:

(i) making curricula and training materials available to private schools under certain conditions covering the ways in which they are applied (and the claims that are made for them);
(ii) providing facilities to improve the skills of private school instructors in needs analysis, programme design, training materials development and instructional techniques;
(iii) providing consulting services to private institutions.

The willingness of the public systems to provide such assistance will probably be a function of the open-mindedness of its managers, especially with regard to the notion of "competition", the demonstrated readiness of the private schools to behave in a responsible fashion in the market-place, and - possibly - an overall co-ordinating policy which offers at least guide-lines on the demarcation of action and target groups between the two systems.

A major problem with the private system is that of maintaining standards and measuring quality. Whilst the "quick-profit" fringe outfits may have little interest in this, the more legitimate schools recognise that it is to their advantage to be seen offering training to a recognisable standard. Some cope with this by training to "international" standards (e.g. City and Guilds of London) but would probably prefer to offer nationally recognised qualifications. An obstacle to this has been the refusal of national trade-testing and certification bodies in many countries to recognise more than a single route to achieving a recognised level of skill proficiency; a rigid adherence, in fact, to time-bound rather than competency-based training.

There are signs, however, that this is changing. Entry points and admission criteria are becoming more flexible and the duration and method of training given are no longer so rigidly prescribed. An effective means of "co-ordinating" the activities of private institutions as regards quality and legitimacy is to enable their students to take national trade tests and to qualify for trade certificates. This is being increasingly understood by national authorities, indeed some are insisting that licensing of private establishments is contingent on training up to nationally recognised standards (not necessarily by the same means and under the same conditions). A few authorities have gone even further, insisting that renewal of licenses depends on a certain success level in trade tests, a move which - whether intentionally or not - introduces a healthy competition between private and public institutions.

It is apparent, therefore, that co-ordination amongst "institutionalised" non-formal skill providers, if it is to have any meaning in a national context, has to take account of the many sources of skills development. These include "public" systems within government, the training provided by sectoral departments of government, the work of non-governmental agencies and the often

large private training sector. Thus the scope of and for co-ordination is much broader than is often supposed, even if one takes no account of non-institutional training - training in or by enterprises, correspondence courses and the many other ways - formal or informal - in which individuals acquire livelihood skills.

4. Co-ordination with the formal education system

This paper is not the place to attempt to define the difference between education and training, indeed some would argue that there is no difference. Yet in most countries distinct systems do exist and their characteristics are quite clearly differentiated.

In the formal education system learning normally takes place in primary and secondary schools, full-time, for young people usually under the age of eighteen. Whereas the public training system is frequently controlled by ministries of labour, the education system (public or private) usually falls under ministries of education. Its objectives, roughly defined, are to impart knowledge, create awareness, and develop intellectual curiosity and capability - all as a preparation for life and for their own intrinsic value. Training systems on the other hand, whilst they incorporate aspects of what education sets out to do, are directed towards developing occupational skills, however broadly or otherwise this term is defined. Occupational skills training normally takes place after the completion of formal education, though this may be at various chronological ages depending on country and circumstances, in particular access to secondary education.

This is the distinction at its simplest and most generalised. And like most generalisations one can pinpoint many exceptions, the most obvious being the "vocationalisation" of general ("elementary", "basic", "academic" - the choice is largely arbitrary) education, either by introducing "vocational" elements into general education itself or by establishing "vocational educational streams" as an alternative to general education at the secondary level. There are many variations on this formula, likewise there is an active, often empassioned debate on the merits of general versus vocational education as a basis for skills acquisition and for working life. This paper,

however, having asserted that vocational education (in the formal system) and non-formal post-school vocational training are indeed distinct will focus in this section on issues of co-ordination between the two "systems".

There are two main issues:

(i) How well is "general" education co-ordinated with training systems in terms of the base it provides for learning occupational skills?

(ii) What co-ordination exists between vocational education (in the formal system) and vocational training?

4.1 General education and occupational skills acquisition

In the broadest sense general education is the natural preparation for acquiring occupational skills. It provides - or should provide - the intellectual tools which enable further learning to take place; the deductive and analytical powers and the knowledge of scientific and technological principles upon which a range of skills can be built. At the very least it should furnish the learner with basic literacy and numeracy. And yet the fact that many countries have felt it necessary to introduce "vocational" elements into their general education could be interpreted as suggesting that, at least as a preparation for "vocational" occupations, general education leaves much to be desired. Much depends on whether school is likely to be the terminal stage in the formal acquisition of knowledge and skills or whether it is viewed as a springboard for further training.

The issue of general education as a base for skills acquisition is the subject not only of debate but also of much misunderstanding and unreasonable expectation. Certainly in many developing countries "general" (or basic) education provides the only formal means whereby the bulk of the population can acquire the theoretical knowledge and intellectual tools needed to pursue a skilled occupation or profession. Does that, as the proponents of "vocationalised" primary and secondary education have argued, mean that schools have to offer skills training or an "orientation" or "pre-training" for a particular skill or family of skills? Almost everything - the physical and motivational development of students, the attitude of parents, the ability

and experience of teachers, the lack of equipment, the unsuitability of buildings, the whole "ethos" of schools and many other factors - suggests not, as does the experience in several countries of large-scale experiments in vocationalisation.

On the other hand, aside from providing the platform for skills acquisition, schools undoubtedly have a role in creating an awareness of the realities of the world of work (in terms of personal discipline, persistence, concentration and a range of behavioural traits on the one hand, and of creativity and enterprise on the other hand) and in furnishing students with certain life skills. Co-ordination becomes an issue when one asks: "do general schools know what the world of work is really like?" and "what are the life skills, analytical abilities and deductive powers needed to succeed in that world?".

Co-ordination with the providers - and processes - of skill training would therefore seem a sine qua non. Schools need to know more about the nature of "skill" and the processes of skills acquisition: they need to understand the conceptual, theoretical, analytical and deductive abilities needed by a vocational trainee learning an occupation, the motor and manipulative skills, and the necessary levels of literacy and numeracy. In this way they would avoid both under- and over-preparation, the raising of false expectations (as regards the "intellectual" content of skills training, for example) and criticism from training institutions and employers that they have to "start again from square one".

Training providers, for their part, would have much more realistic expectations of what schools can and cannot do by way of preparation for skills acquisition. Training institutions are sometimes taken by surprise by the low quality of much general education and find themselves having to incorporate basic literacy and numeracy skills into their programmes. Since these programmes are usually time-bound the "end-product" may be less well-trained than would otherwise have been the case. This in turn may lead to employers' complaints about the quality of vocational training, particularly with respect to trainees' adaptability and grasp of basic technological principles. The role of vocational training in promoting a form of functional literacy and numeracy linked to task performance should not be

underestimated; but nor should it be considered an ideal state of affairs, being at best an expedient to overcome inadequacies in the education system.

The need for interaction and co-ordination between general education and occupational skills acquisition would seem to be obvious and relatively easy to achieve. However world-wide evidence suggests that it is not. The worlds of the formal and non-formal, school and post-school, the general and the applied, the "liberal" ethos and hard-nosed are far apart, and these differences are institutionalised in the divisions of ministerial responsibility, notably between ministries of education and of labour.

The co-ordination issues arising can be summarised as follows:

(i) How can the formal school system and non-formal post-school training systems work more closely together to improve the fit between the two?
(ii) How can perceptions of what the one expects from the other be clarified?
(iii) What kind of mechanisms can be established to foster dialogue between the two systems?

4.2 Vocational education and vocational training

The other, more "traditional" response of formal education to the preparation of young people for working life is the vocational and/or technical stream in secondary education. Since a relatively small proportion of primary or middle-school graduates find places in vocational secondary schools, one might summise that those who do form a "technological elite" - the master craftsmen, supervisors and technicians of the future.

Whilst this may be partially true of graduates from post-secondary technical institutes it does not seem to hold good for vocational/technical secondary schools. Some studies have suggested that the rate of return to vocational education (in terms of personal income) is often inferior to that of general education (although here it is necessary to disentangle what is due to poor quality schools from what results from taking lower quality students).

Certainly employers frequently complain that vocational secondary graduates have to be retrained "from scratch" and have completely unrealistic perceptions of work and industrial/commercial environments. Vocational education itself has often been perceived by students and their parents as the poor relation of secondary education, the refuge of those who fail to make it to the "academic" secondary streams. Whilst this last observation may not represent the situation in all developing countries (in Brazil, for example, vocational schools are apparently of high quality and prestige), it is certainly true of many even though the growing problem of youth unemployment is casting doubt on the value of academic secondary schools as a passport to a job.

The apparent crisis in vocational/technical education derives in part from a lack of clarity as to its objectives. Is vocational education merely an alternative route to "re-entry" into higher-level academic education, or is it properly concerned with providing specific occupational skills as a direct preparation for employment? If it is the latter - and many countries seem to see it as such - then a major issue arises, namely: what are the respective roles of formal vocational education and non-formal vocational training within an overall strategy for skills development? There is no single, simple answer since the social and economic environment in which education and training take place will influence their roles, status and relative importance and will differ from country to country. Nevertheless the issue has to be addressed.

The question breaks down into several sub-issues, each with implications for co-ordination:

(i) are formal vocational education and non-formal vocational training trying to do different jobs; if so, what?

(ii) are they trying to do the same thing, but for different target groups (e.g. non-formal training for post-school-age youth, school drop-outs, those with lower-levels of academic attainment)?

(iii) are they working at different levels, both of knowledge and attainment and of job specificity?

(iv) does formal education link with and provide a base for more specific job training?

(v) where do the comparative advantages of both lie?

The intention of this paper is not to try to answer these questions but rather to point out that in a co-ordinated approach to developing skills, national authorities do need to find answers. And if the answer is that both "systems" are doing the same thing, then at least this should be known and decisions - for instance on allocation of domestic and international development resources - taken in the light of this knowledge.

One "danger" inherent in the tendency for formal vocational education and non-formal vocational training to do the same thing is that, almost inevitably, the "formal" pattern wins out. The world-wide escalation of demand for formal education tends to transform non-formal programmes, causing training to lose its applied character (in favour of a more theoretical or "academic" one). Vocational training programmes, de facto, become regular schools and, in the process, the better educated drive out those with lesser entry qualifications. Whereas a few years ago the majority of vocational training students had only primary education, an increasing number are now secondary school graduates.

The pressure for integration (rather than co-ordination) of the two systems is also fuelled by a desire to maximise available resources for skills development. Commendable though this is, it should not blind planners to the manifest unsuitability of many formal vocational schools for specific job-entry training. Not only is their "ethos" inappropriate - in many cases they simply do not have necessary workshop equipment, training instructors, or an adequate understanding of skills needed in the outside world. Integrating two inadequately functioning systems does not guarantee their better operation. On the contrary, there is ample evidence to indicate that the integration (or mutual support) of poor training with poor vocational education, while satisfying the providers, probably does more harm than good. Indiscriminate pressure for integration may well divert attention from other worthy strategies that might prove more appropriate.[4]

Co-ordination does not mean forcing all vocational eduction and training into the same pattern - particularly where this leads potentially to the marginalisation of large numbers of young people for whom, for a variety of reasons, formal vocational schools do not represent a feasible or attainable method of skills acquisition. Therefore closer co-ordination between formal

vocational education and non-formal vocational training implies not only that the two systems work closer together but that their respective objectives, capabilities and clienteles be clearly perceived and differentiated where, indeed, they are different. This in turn implies the need for clearly articulated policies for skills formation within which the co-ordinating framework can be developed.

Whatever the roles that are eventually assigned to vocational education and training, wherever the boundaries are drawn, there is a clear and convincing case for formal and non-formal vocational education/training to work more closely together in areas such as curriculum and programme development, practical experience for instructors, common standards and testing procedures and sharing of workshop facilities. Equally there is a strong argument in favour of formal vocational schools focussing on the knowledge and theory components of a broadly defined group of occupations, as a basis for more specific job training either in vocational training centres or in some form of enterprise-based training. As regards target groups, by definition vocational schools will work with those who have been able to progress to secondary education. As noted earlier, the vocational training system is also increasingly providing post-secondary skills training, but it appears to have an important role to play in providing skills to school dropouts and to those whose employment possibilities lie in the micro-enterprise or informal sectors.

Identifying and exploiting the respective strengths of vocational training so as to ensure complementary and maximise the use of resources are critical elements in any co-ordinated approach to meeting skill needs. So, too, is the creation of an acceptable and unambiguous co-ordinating framework. Achieving these objectives, however, may not be straightforward, as the following case study - drawn from a country with well-developed vocational education and training systems - clearly shows.

CASE STUDY ON CO-ORDINATION

Vocational training in its present form goes back to the establishment of a network of industrial training institutes for craftsman training soon after independence. At roughly the same time a national apprenticeship scheme also came into being. Subsequently institutes for craft instructor training, advanced skill training and foreman training were established.

These various institutes and schemes are controlled by the Ministry of Labour which "is entrusted with responsibility for laying down policies, designing training standards and organising various training programmes to ensure a regular flow of skilled manpower at the national level". In the formulation of national policy the Government is advised by a National Council for Vocational Training (chaired by the Minister for Labour).

Efforts to vocationalise the education system predate independence, and a report prepared in the mid-1960's linked education to development and productivity and laid down a detailed scheme for vocationalisation. These proposals were revived in the 1985 report of a working group on vocationalisation of education reporting to the Ministry of Education. This report stated that traditionally "vocational education" had been undertood as education designed to prepare skilled personnel ... for one or more groups of occupations, trades or jobs", but it suggested broadening the term to cover skill development at all levels, both through formal and non-formal programmes.

A policy document on education, issued in 1986, defined the role of education as "developing manpower for different levels of the economy". In its section on "vocationalisation" the document makes it clear that vocational education is meant "to enhance employability and reduce the mismatch between the demand and supply of skilled manpower" and "to prepare students for identified occupations". It also stated that in the interests of integration the industrial training institutes would conform "to the larger vocational pattern" and added that the successor to the Ministry of Education would "co-ordinate the balanced development of vocational education".

Needless to say, the Ministry of Labour became somewhat alarmed by this document which not only set out identical aims for formal vocational schools and its own "non-formal" institutes but also seemed to suggest that another ministry would in effect "co-ordinate" them. The policy was adopted by the parliament but with the understanding that the programme of action would be presented to a subsequent session. It was at this stage that Ministry of Labour was able to introduce a reference to the need to clarify the distinct role of vocational schools vis-à-vis those of industrial training institutes and other certificate level institutions.

The "compromise" solution adopted, whereby in effect the industrial training institutes under MOL would provide job entry training for engineering/industrial trades and formal schools offer vocational education for commercial occupations, may be quite pragmatic but it does not go to the heart of the problem of co-ordinating job entry training so as to maximise available resources.

5. Co-ordination with the outside world

Co-ordination with the world outside education and training systems means, essentially, co-ordination with the labour market-place. Whilst education *per se* develops the "inner man", vocational education and training by definition have to do with skills for work and livelihood and, as such, with the "market-place" in which those skills can be traded. This assumption is rarely challenged and is the rationale, tacitly or explicitly acknowledged, which helps frame the objectives of vocational and technical education and training in most countries.

The co-ordination problems, apart from those of *how* to achieve contact with the outside world (taken up in the next section), arise mainly from difficulties in deciding the scope and regularity of contact. With whom should training systems be in contact? At what level and how often? What, and where, is the labour market-place? All these questions apply largely to the demand side of the relationship. Over and above this, training systems have also to consider the supply side: who, where and how many are their clients?

5.1 Training and manpower planning

The "classical" route for co-ordination with the labour market is via manpower and skills demand forecasting at the macro or sectoral level. Undoubtedly, as Richter[5] points out, such forecasts are necessary to the "taking of informed and rational decisions on the nature and content of training programmes and projects". He goes on to say that "the indispensible basis for such decision-making is the availability of adequate information on the actual situation and perspective development of labour markets". So the first level of co-ordination is clearly between manpower planners and training planners.

The essential problem here is that the labour market, not the manpower planner, is the consumer of skills. Training systems are expected to produce workers equipped with skills to perform real, specific jobs, but the planning

information they receive, even if it were accurate at the time of compilation, is usually insufficiently disaggregated, and often applies to broad occupational classifications rather than to real jobs. The shortcomings of conventional approaches to manpower forecasting and planning are well enough known; to the extent that training systems try to achieve co-ordination with the market-place via that route they will, and do, experience the same problems often in a more exaggerated form.

Training systems certainly need long-term planning horizons and for this manpower forecasts, themselves based on other components of national or sectoral development policy, have a contribution to make. Where they tend to be wholly inadequate is in providing insights into rapid shifts in market demand and in bridging the gap between the supposed skill content of occupations and the real skill requirements of jobs actually available on the market-place. The inertia and resistance to change inherent in many training systems is re-inforced by the relative inflexibility and insensitivity of manpower forecasting procedures.

5.2 Training and technological change

Nowhere is this inertia more apparent than in the response of training systems to technological change. This issue has been widely discussed and written about recently.[6] The main co-ordination question is how do training systems, predicated on a relatively stable labour market and a gradual rate of change, cope not only with new types and groupings of skills (i.e. new occupations) but also with a more volatile labour market and an accelerating rate of change?

This paper does not attempt to provide the answers to these complex questions but it can draw attention to a few avenues for improved co-ordination. These include:

(i) establishing and maintaining links within and beyond government with key organisations in the area of technological development (e.g. ministries of science and technology and of industry, public and private industry research centres, technologically advanced sectors and industries, universities, etc;

(ii) maintaining a close relationship with economic planning organisations, development banks and other institutions financing or sponsoring technological upgrading and innovation in industry and public services;

(iii) going beyond the formal contacts with employers' and workers' organisations (usually in "tripartite advisory committees" or the like) to find out what is actually happening at the enterprise level;

(iv) undertaking joint projects with institutions and enterprises on the introduction of new technologies.

Of course it has to be said that much of this effort would be wasted if training institutions do not have the time, resources, freedom, creativity and will to innovate, and if their lead-time for modifying existing programmes or introducing new ones is such that they are obsolete before they reach the public. The co-ordination effort should also yield a clear understanding of who does what, since training institutions cannot reasonably be expected to provide the minutia of skills required for every piece of new technology applied in a variety of processes and industrial settings.

5.3 Training and the labour market

That which public training systems generally do best is to train for formal wage-sector employment. This is because:

(i) manpower and skills forecasts, to the extent that they assist training planners, deal primarily with these sectors;

(ii) the formal wage sector tends to be stable as regards its skill demands (although this is changing) and training providers have more experience of working with the sector;

(iii) occupational segmentation as practiced in larger-scale industries fits well with the type of training programmes offered (or vice versa);

(iv) the longer-duration training normally offered by training centres is suited to skill levels demanded by formal sector employment and to the economic circumstances of trainees who might (because of their academic background, social status, etc.) reasonably expect to find formal sector employment;

(v) the type of advice training systems receive from skill users tends to come from formal sector employers, often the larger ones, typically through employers' organisations.

It is now very clear, however, that the bulk of new employment opportunities in most developing countries - and increasingly in several industrialised countries - lies either in small-scale enterprises (whether within or outside the "formal" sector) or completely outside the wage sector (i.e. in self-employment or in non-remunerated work for improving the quality of individual and/or community life). This trend is being re-inforced by adjustment policies which emphasize higher levels of productivity and a reduction in public sector/parastatal employment. So how can the activities of training systems be better co-ordinated with skill needs of this large, "informal market"; how indeed, can training systems, even get to know of these needs?

This issue is the subject of much current debate which is elaborated in other papers.[7] There are no easy answers available; perhaps all one can say at this stage is that training systems and institutions have to find ways:

(i) to work with associations of small businesses and those organisations, such as small enterprise development centres, active in promotion and support of small enterprises;

(ii) to establish contacts with the informal sector, possibly through the various bodies, governmental and - more particularly - non-governmental working with the sector;

(iii) to build-up an adaptive capacity to respond to training needs in a flexible and non-conventional way (e.g. through shorter courses, part-time and evening programmes, training geared specifically to immediate income-earning possibilities or job needs, training that does not place too high a premium on literacy, academic qualification, the "classroom environment", etc.).

(iv) to ensure that the training they offer continues to meet the purposes for which it was designed.

To be able to accomplish these things, training systems need greater freedom of action than many presently enjoy and greater resources to encourage and support innovation and experimentation. This implies the need for close co-ordination of the work of training systems with those of other bodies promoting the small business and informal sectors. It also suggests that at higher levels of planning, co-ordination and resource distribution the potential role of public training systems in relation to the "informal market" needs to be better appreciated. There is growing evidence, for example, that training for community-based self-employment schemes can be delivered effectively through existing training structures provided that the staff of the concerned training centres themselves receive proper orientation to and training for their new roles.

All the above has an underlying "demand-side" orientation. Yet, as noted earlier, there is little doubt that national training systems are often obliged to act as instruments of social policy, particularly in respect of what to do with growing youth populations entering static or shrinking labour markets. The mandate to provide some form of "employable skill" to large numbers of young people needs to be framed in close collaboration with the actual possibilities in the market-place. Otherwise it becomes an empty political gesture, a device for deferring problems which ultimately exacerbates those problems by building up unfulfilled expectations. This means that social and economic policies themselves need to be well co-ordinated, so that training systems are not caught in the dilemma of trying to reconcile labour-market "pull" with supply-side (i.e. social, demographic) "push".

5.4 Training and the enterprise

A great deal of training takes place, formally or informally, systematically or haphazardly, in enterprises. This is for a variety of reasons, however in the context of a discussion on co-ordination we can focus on one: the view that the public training system does not provide graduates

with the skills needed to make them immediately employable. Insufficient breadth, insufficient depth, lack of practical experience, lack of theoretical understanding and many other reasons, sometimes contradictory, are cited. Some employers are reported as preferring graduates from vocational and technical education, though it is not clear how these graduates could be persuaded, at least until the recent phenomenon of the "educated unemployed", to take the sort of jobs that were on offer. The situation is well summed-up by Kenneth King who points out that there is " a quite appropriate tension between the requirement of the employer and the obligations of the State to provide trained people to industry. The negotiation between these two main actors produces the national training system, but this system is usually the result of a compromise between employer preferences and the State's obligations to avoid too early or too narrow specialisation".[8]

One could go further and say that the "national training system" is not only a negotiation between employers and training institutions but rather a partnership between the two. The key issue of co-ordination, therefore, is how to forge that partnership, how to fully exploit the potential of both training institutions and enterprises in a shared responsibility for training. A number of possibilities exist:

(i) "alternance" training, whereby trainees spend periods in both training centres and in the workplace;
(ii) training centre assistance to apprenticeship schemes which may involve periods of "alternance" training;
(iii) training centre assistance to various other forms of in-plant training activities.

Such partnership arrangements help to ensure that training is based on an appreciation of the actual working environment (technological, organisational, managerial), and does not give rise to unrealistic expectations.

Unfortunately the potential of this partnership in developing countries is rather limited under existing conditions. Most arrangements of this type are confined to the modern sector which generally offers only a low labour absorption capacity. Apprenticeship and other types of in-plant training

normally pre-suppose employment, even if of a temporary duration and at reduced rates of pay. Few organisations are willing to train young people in excess of their own probable needs, and in periods of economic, structural or technological transition even these needs are difficult to forecast with any degree of accuracy. A further limitation on the usefulness of enterprise-based training is the capability of companies to train in a systematic, cost- and time-effective way, to consciously create learning situations in the course of productive work, and to establish a working relationship with a training institution. Medium and small-scale enterprises face particular difficulties, lacking as they do training experience and expertise, a problem that becomes increasingly acute as one approaches the boundary with the "informal" sector.

Despite these limitations, closer co-ordination of institution-based and enterprise-based training has much to offer. The public training system can provide assistance to national apprenticeship schemes, in-plant training consultancy services, training courses for company instructors, and the development of training curricula and materials; it can also open national trade-testing and certification facilities to enterprise-trained workers thus enhancing their occupational mobility. On the other hand, closer co-ordination would enable skilled workers to provide a much needed infusion of practical experience and up-to-date knowledge of technological processes into the programmes of training centres, aside from ensuring that these programmes actually provided the basis of knowledge and skills upon which firms would subsequently build. If these linkages are important in assisting the public system to do better job-entry training they become even more important if training institutions are to play a role in retraining and skills upgrading, areas which are assuming greater importance in an era of technological and structural change.

6. Mechanisms for co-ordination

As we noticed at the outset, it is virtually axiomatic that training endeavours and systems should be co-ordinated, and the paper has raised a number of issues relating to the question: "co-ordinated with what?"

That leaves us with the problem of how they should be co-ordinated. A number of "models" have been tried, but few have proved entirely successful. Two such models are examined in this section, with the reasons for their comparative lack of success highlighted.

6.1 The "co-ordinating ministry" model

One co-ordination "model" which appears not to acknowledge the distinction between managing and co-ordinating, referred to earlier, assigns responsibility for co-ordination to a single ministry. If that ministry were the ministry of planning (or its equivalent) arguably such an arrangement might work since planning bodies have a broad overview of national priorities as well as a degree of authority derived from their close links with those who determine budgets. Even then, as a Senior ILO expert with first-hand experience of the subject observed, "large-scale education and training systems do not spring, fully armed, from the decisions of any central planning process. At best such ... systems are mule-like: potentially useful, but inclined to intractability and ultimate sterility". There again, planning ministries have too much on their hands to be able to give detailed attention to what they probably consider the proper responsibility of line ministries. The tendency is to set up co-ordinating committees, some of whose inadequacies will be discussed shortly.

A more usual "solution", however, is to assign co-ordinating responsibility for vocational training to ministries of manpower or labour. The rationale is impeccable in that such ministries are supposedly best informed of both the supply and demand sides of the manpower equation, have access to up-to-date information and are in contact with the labour market. The ministries establish a "co-ordinating" body - a directorate, a national training bureau or something similar - and more often than not build up a network of training centres (the "public training system" referred to earlier) under their direct control. this network is managed with varying degree of effectiveness by the concerned bureau within the ministry.

Difficulties arise when the "co-ordinating ministry" actually tries to co-ordinate the training undertaken by other ministries. If co-ordination as we defined it earlier has to do with having the parts function together for a wider purpose, who determines that wider purpose? Ministries of labour find it difficult to reach a consensus with other ministries, notably ministries of education, on the objectives of their respective endeavours in vocational education and training and what the nature and extent of co-ordination should be. "Co-ordination" can often be interpreted as bureaucratic interference, and where the co-ordinating ministry is also a training provider competition for funds may complicate relationships with other ministries.

In most developing countries labour ministries are junior to ministries of education and less well resourced; this places them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis more powerful ministries and seldom allows them to build up the technical authority which might overcome administrative difficulties. All in all, the co-ordinating role of line ministries vis-à-vis other line ministries tends either to be ignored or the mandate is fiercely challenged. Narrow definition of what constitutes the national training system also leads to situations of conflict occasionally bordering on the absurd. In one Asian country, for example, separate ministries are convinced that they have the co-ordinating mandate, a situation which arises from the responsibility of one for institution-based training and of the other for apprenticeship and youth training.

6.2 The "training council" model

The generally unfavourable experience with the co-ordinating ministry mechanism has led to the growth of a second "model" for co-ordination, that of the national training council or its equivalent. On the face of it, and sometimes in practice, this is a more promising approach to co-ordination for a number of reasons:

(i) the council can be relatively independent of any particular line ministry;

(ii) it can cover a wide spectrum of training providers, public and private;

(iii) a broad range of skill users can be represented;

(iv) it can be structured into regional or sectoral councils reflecting specific local needs;

(v) it can be so positioned and constituted that it discharges a true co-ordination role, leaving the management of delivery systems to those best equipped to do so;

(vi) it can be tripartite in character;

(vii) it can appoint and control working groups for specific projects such as curriculum development.

The kinds of things that training councils should be good at include:

(i) achieving consensus on the broad aims of skills development;

(ii) promoting contact and fostering compatibility between the many sources of training

(iii) developing agreed standards, curricula and certification procedures including agreeing on uniform job specification;

(iv) administering (directly or through a designated body) apprenticeship and trade-testing schemes;

(v) certifying training institutions and trainers;

(vi) undertaking research and information exchange;

(vii) keeping abreast of labour market trends and the main lines of economic and social policy;

(viii) raising the visibility and standing of vocational education and training;

(ix) assuring quality standards.

Of course a national training council need not - indeed, cannot - carry out all these functions itself. It can appoint task forces and commission developmental activities, but its main way of working is via the agencies and bodies represented on it. Thus, to give a simple example, ministries of labour will continue to manage the national training centre network, ministries of education the techanical and vocational schools, and universities and specialised institutions their research programmes. But all will be operating with a clear understanding of each others' contribution, towards agree objectives, within a broad policy framework and, where

appropriate, to common standards. Autonomy is preserved, bureaucratic interference is minimised, but responsibility and accountability are clearly defined.

Why, then, in practice have national training councils and their like sometimes failed to deliver these blessings, and why have they failed to achieve true co-ordination amongst training systems, users and providers? In a basic issues paper we cannot examine this complex question in depth, but a number of problem areas can be identified.

In the first place the role and purpose of such a body is not always clearly perceived. Is it meant to reach decisions which are then binding on implementing agencies (e.g. concerning who does what, common standards and terminology, target groups, etc.), does it merely recommend, or is it no more than a forum for the exchange of views? All are legitimate roles, depending on circumstances, but need to be well defined to avoid misunderstanding and unreasonable expectations.

The scope and composition of training councils can have a decisive influence on their effectiveness. Given the multiplicity of skill providers in a country, a training council is unlikely to achieve useful results if its scope is limited, say, to the public sector or to institution-based training. The purpose of co-ordination, after all, is to make all the parts of the "system" function in a complementary fashion. Clearly, the "influence" a council can exert in the different parts of the system will vary. It will usually have more direct control over government agencies than over enterprises or private training institutions, but even here influence can be exerted, complementarity encouraged and quality standards enhanced. On the "demand side", whilst the "normal" tripartite constitution of most co-ordinating bodies ensures that the views of organised labour and formal sector employers are taken into account, a very inadequate picture of real skill needs and opportunities will emerge if ways are not found to solicit the views of the unorganised or informal sector.

National training councils are therefore faced with a dilemma. On the one hand their composition should be as broad as possible in order to obtain a

representative picture of needs and opportunities. On the other hand, too large a council is likely to be unwieldy, will encounter great difficulty in coming together on a regular basis, and will be too diffuse. Careful selection of members is essential, and this applies not only to whom they represent but also to the level of representation.

The evolution ("devolution" might be more appropriate) of several co-ordinating bodies of this kind shows a pattern of regular meetings attended by high-level participants at the beginning declining to less frequent meetings and lower-level participation. The problem of finding the right level of participation has to do with the likelihood that decision- and policy-makers are not technicians and vice-versa, but such difficulties are not insurmountable if clear agendas and terms of reference are established.

The problem of representation is also influenced by the level at which the co-ordinating council is constituted, to whom it reports and who acts as its secretariat (and this, of course, is partly a function of the responsibilities assigned to it). Without going too far into this complex issue, a co-ordinating council responsible to or closely associated with a line minister will face difficulties with other ministries and agencies. Ideally the council should be placed high in the government hierarchy (prime-minister's office, for example) with clear links to both the planning function and to the treasury. At the same time, placing it high but allocating to it a comparatively junior offical will diminish its status and effectiveness. Similar considerations apply to the choice of secretariat, particularly if one of its functions is to monitor the implementation of directives/recommendations issued by the council.

A final, seemingly obvious point is that there should be only one overall co-ordinating council for vocational education and training. As noted above, this does not preclude a structure in which co-ordinating bodies are set-up - within the framework of the council - to represent local or sectoral interests, to handle the development of job classifications or standard curricula, to agree on skill standards etc. But it should obviate the situation in which several different co-ordinating bodies are established,

each believing that it has the sole mandate in the broad field of vocational education and training (a seemingly improbable situation of which several examples unfortunately exist).

There are many other "models" of co-ordination, most of them variations on the two basic types outlined above. In some countries, however, a more decentralised approach is adopted, based on local industry committees, training centre advisory boards and similar mechanisms. This works well where national standards are not considered to be of great importance and where local communities and institutions have a high degree of administrative autonomy and financial independence.

In this section we have not attempted to catalogue mechanisms of co-ordination but rather to highlight some of the pitfalls on the ways to successful co-ordination and to hint at ways of avoiding them.

7. Summary and conclusions

This paper has examined some aspects of the co-ordination of training and training systems. We are in an era where greater than ever demands are being made of training systems; training is facing new challenges (structural, technological, social and demographic, amongst others); at the same time, available resources - at least in government - are declining.

The conjunction of these circumstances points clearly to the need for a more rational use of resources and a targeting of effort. Better co-ordination is often cited as an important contributor to achieving these objectives, but little attention has been paid to what is really meant by co-ordination: what is to be co-ordinated, by whom, how, and - ultimately - for what purpose?

We have drawn attention to the distinction that should be made between managing a "training system" (typically a number of government-run training institutions) and co-ordinating what is usually a broader range of training provisions. We have also suggested that for co-ordination to be effective it

needs to take account of both internal and external elements. Internal co-ordination, at least in government, has to do with ensuring that the training provided by various ministries and agencies makes best use of limited resources, is harmonised to the greatest extent possible and is mutually - re-inforcing. Competition can be healthy in encouraging the maintenance of high quality training, but may lead to elitism and a scramble for funds. We have also examined the much-debated issue of co-ordination between vocational training and vocational education, whether given as a component of general education or as a differentiated stream in secondary schools.

External aspects of co-ordination relate firstly to the wider world of training, particularly to that which takes place outside government (for example training given by non-governmental organisations) and in the private sector. These sources of skills development constitute a major resource for many developing countries, but the tendency has been for policy-makers and planners to ignore their existence. Co-ordination here has less to do with control and regulation than with ensuring quality, providing support to extra-governmental training efforts for target groups which the "formal" training system finds difficult to reach, and exploiting the comparative advantage of each system.

The second aspect of external co-ordination is that of linkages with the outside world, the labour market and the consumers of skills. Here we have suggested that the main issues are those pertaining to achieving and maintaining relevance to needs and possibilities in the labour market. We have drawn attention to the particular difficulties of adapting training systems to fast-changing demands (for example those associated with technological and structural change) and to the growing "informal" labour market. In this connection, co-ordination of training with manpower planning and development seems to be critical, as does the need for more decentralised, more adaptive approaches to determining skill needs.

Having reviewed some of the main characteristics of co-ordination we have gone on to examine a number of co-ordination "models". Our conclusion is that there is no single model that is appropriate for all circumstances and that to the extent that approaches to co-ordination have proved less that successful

this may be the result of a misconception of the scope and nature of co-ordination. It may also have to do with a lack of awareness of some issues and problems inherent in the process of co-ordination, and it is in these areas that the paper has attempted to provide some insights.

At the outset we made the point that the paper was a preliminary identification and discussion of issues relating to co-ordination. As such, whilst possible solutions to problems of co-ordination may perhaps be inferred from the discussion, it is premature to offer prescriptions. There is a need for further research into the subject, analysing actual practice and examining in greater detail the various components of what is undoubtedly a more complex issue than is often supposed.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For a definition of "non-formal skills training" see ILO: Youth, Report V, International Labour Conference 72nd Session, (Geneva, ILO), 1986, pp. 84.

2. "Supply-orientated" in this case indicating the "supply" of young people entering the labour market.

3. For a more detailed discussion of human resources impact analysis see S.K. Jain: "The need for an operational thrust to human resources development" in International Labour Review, (Geneva, ILO), Nov-Dec 1986, pp. 697-713.

4. For further discussion of this question see, for example, C. de Moura Castro: "Is vocational education really that bad", in International Labour Review (Geneva, ILO), Sept-Oct 1987, pp. 603-610.

5. L. Richter: Training needs: assessment and monitoring, (Geneva, ILO), 1986, pp. 1.

6. See, for example, ILO: Training and retraining - implications of technological change, Report III, Fourth European Regional Conference, (Geneva, ILO), 1987.

7. See, for example, Kenneth J. King: Training for the urban informal sector in developing countries: issues for practitioners, Vocational Training Branch Discussion Paper No. 8, (Geneva, ILO), 1987; and Fred Fluitman (ed.): Training in the urban informal sector of developing countries: some recent findings of local observers, Vocational Training Branch Paper No. 6, (Geneva, ILO), 1987.

8. Kenneth J. King: The planning of technical and vocational education and training, IIEP Occasional Papers No. 72, (Paris, UNESCO), 1985, pp. 19.

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